

April 2007 - Greetings from the Department of Labor & Economic Growth (DLEG). Beginning with this e-mail, I will provide regular updates to all major stakeholders in Michigan's workforce system – employers, unions, advocacy groups, and leaders and staff from Michigan Works!, community colleges, and the state – anyone interested in getting the latest news on the important work we all do together. If you know of people who should be receiving this e-mail, please send us their addresses. And if you have news or ideas you'd like to share, just holler! In the meantime, here's our very first update, which as you will see contains some helpful tools and quite a bit of important news.

Here are the items in today's update:

- No Worker Left Behind Talking Points
- We're Getting More TAA Funds Than We Thought!
- Let's Go After USDOL's \$3.6 Million in Funding for Grassroots Organizations!
- Moving TAA and WIA Money to the Field -- The Good News and the Not-Yet Good News
- Detroit Demonstration Project Approved

1. **No Worker Left Behind (NWLB) Talking Points.** We've got a great workgroup of all the key stakeholders putting together the plan to implement the Governor's new initiative. We hope she approves it in May and we launch it in time for the fall semester. Meanwhile, we're getting a lot of inquiries about the program. So we created **the attached talking points and Q&A** to help front line staff everywhere talk to the public about NWLB in these weeks before it is formally launched. Please spread them widely electronically or on paper. Also, please visit our website, www.michigan.gov/nwlb for future updates. If you have any additional ideas here, please let us know!

[Attachment: Talking Points](#)

[Attachment: Q&A](#)

Background: The NWLB program will provide up to two years' free tuition at any Michigan community college or other approved training program, and allow displaced workers to receive needed training in high demand skills while receiving unemployment benefits. Qualifying workers must pursue an occupational certificate or associate's degree in a high-demand occupation, emerging industry, or entrepreneurship program. Eligible participants have three years to sign up for this one-time offer.

2. **We're Getting More TAA Funds Than We Thought!**

On February 15, 2007, DLEG submitted a formal request to the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) for an additional \$11.7 million to help serve and enroll over 10,000 Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) participants in worker training programs. At the request of the Governor's office, Michigan's congressional delegation submitted a letter of support – signed by every member of Michigan's delegation – asking for quick action to ensure there would be no disruption in the services provided to Michigan's workers.

DLEG received notification from the USDOL in early March of an additional TAA award we originally thought to be \$11 million dollars. But it turns out that the USDOL is providing the full \$11.7 million request, **plus** an additional \$1.8 million for administration –allowing us to provide the entire \$11.7 million for worker training at the local level.

3. **Let's Go After USDOL's \$3.6 Million in Funding for Grassroots Organizations!**

On April 5, the USDOL announced it is making \$3.6M available to faith and community based organizations to help members of hard-to-serve populations prepare for and succeed in employment. I want to encourage all of our Michigan partners to think creatively about how their local organizations might win some of these funds.

Here are some highlights of the technical requirements:

- Grassroots Organizations eligible to apply include 501(c)(3)'s that provide social services as a major part of their mission; have a social services budget of \$500K or less; and are headquartered in the local community to which they provide these services.

- Successful proposals will coordinate with existing job training and employment opportunities at the one-stop career center to help target populations receive services, enter employment, be retrained, and improve their wages.
- Target populations include ex-offenders, immigrants, limited English speakers, veterans, victims of violent crime, single working mothers, homeless persons, individuals living in specific low income areas, and individuals with disabilities.
- Services may include pre- and post-job placement mentoring, intensive case management, job retention support, life skills training, employability skills, etc.
- Proposals should provide for a formal partnership with the workforce development board/one-stop operator to produce two-way client referrals evidenced by a written agreement of letter of intent.

The deadline to apply is May 8, 2007. If you want help developing an idea, please contact Janet Howard, DLEG Bureau of Workforce Programs Deputy Director at 517-241-2430 howardj1@michigan.gov. Applicants can get more information and grant application forms online at <http://www.doleta.gov/sga/sga.cfm>.

4. Moving TAA and WIA Money to the Field -- The Good News and the Not-Yet Good News.

First, the Good News. DLEG has been assured by the State Budget Office (SBO) that federal Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) grants are exempt under the Governor's Executive Directive 2007-11. That means they will not be caught up in the current state budget crisis, which makes sense because it's all federal money that can only be used for its intended purpose.

Second, the Not-Yet Good News. DLEG has temporarily run out of spending authority. We are awaiting action by the state legislature to allow us to move significant amounts of TAA and WIA monies to the field. We submitted requests to the State Budget Office for increased spending authority on January 12 and February 26, and the SBO passed on the requests to the legislature on February 27 and March 15. The Senate Appropriations Committee finally authorized us to move \$35M in WIA funds and \$4.7M in TAA funds. Hopefully, the full Senate will approve it soon, and send it on to the House. How much does this matter? Until both houses act, we can not send any more money to the field.

- 5. Detroit Demonstration Project Approved.** On Friday, April 13, DLEG Director Keith Cooley informed the Detroit Workforce Development Department (DWDD) that DLEG has approved DWDD's request for a demonstration project to run from May 1, 2007 to April 30, 2009. Detroit sought permission to self deliver core and intensive services for a two year period in order to overhaul the way it delivers workforce services. In particular, DWDD seeks to come up with ways to avoid hand-offs of customers by having one job coach work with them from the time they enter the system until they have completed training and been successfully employed; and to develop career development centers in partnership with educational institutions, nonprofits and private sector employers, so that dislocated workers can identify career paths and engage in training with a greater assurance they will find a good job at the end. We wish DWDD well as it tries to develop innovative service delivery methods from which we all may learn.

More to come soon . . .

Best Regards,



Andy Levin
DLEG Deputy Director